

Message Text

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TO USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
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AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: NATO, PORG

SUBJECT: BUDAPEST MEETING OF COMMUNIST IDEOLOGUES

REF: (A) USNATO 3063 (NOTAL); (B) BUCHAREST 1907 (NOTAL)

1. IN RESPONSE TO FRG QUERY (REF A), MISSION MAY CIRCULATE
FOLLOWING PAPER AT APRIL 11 POLADS MEETING.

2. BEGIN TEXT:
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ROMANIA TRIES TO THWART SOVIET EFFORTS TO BUILD COMMON
IDEOLOGICAL FRONT

A. THE MEETING OF IDEOLOGY AND PROPAGANDA SECRETARIES OF
WARSAW PACT AND CEMA MEMBER COUNTRIES, HELD IN BUDAPEST,
FEBRUARY 28-MARCH 1, APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN LESS THAN A

RESOUNDING SUCCESS FOR THE SOVIETS BECAUSE OF ROMANIAN OBSTRUCTIONISM. ITS MAIN IMMEDIATE PURPOSE -- TO ORCHESTRATE THEMES VIS-A-VIS THE WEST, FOCUSING PARTICULARLY ON COUNTERING HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES AFTER CSCE AND ATTACKING THE ENHANCED RADIATION WARHEAD ON THE EVE OF THE UN SPECIAL SESSION ON DISARMAMENT -- WAS TO SOME

EXTENT ACCOMPLISHED. BUT THE APPARENT LONG-RANGE AIM TO INSTITUTIONALIZE "COMMON IDEOLOGICAL FRONT" CONSULTATIONS AMONG SOVIET ALLIES SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN THWARTED.

B. COMMON PROGRAM VIS-A-VIS THE WEST: REVERBERATIONS FROM THE MEETING BOTH IN THE EAST EUROPEAN PRESS AND IN PARTY PRONOUNCEMENTS DURING THE PAST MONTH MAKE IT CLEAR THAT MOSCOW'S AIM HAD BEEN TO DEVELOP A COMMON IDEOLOGICAL AND PROPAGANDA PROGRAM AGAINST "ANTI-COMMUNIST AND ANTI-DETENTE CAMPAIGNS WHICH ARE PROLIFERATING IN CAPITALIST COUNTRIES." ROMANIA CLEARLY DIFFERED WITH THE OTHER PARTICIPANTS ON A NUMBER OF ISSUES, BUT THE MOST IMPORTANT DISAGREEMENT WAS OVER THE MEETING ITSELF, WHICH ROMANIA PERCEIVED AS AN ATTEMPT TO INSTITUTIONALIZE SUCH CONSULTATIONS. (A SIMILAR MEETING WAS HELD IN SOFIA IN MARCH 1977.)

C. RUMORS OF "VIOLENT ARGUMENTS" BETWEEN SOVIET CHIEF DELEGATE PONOMAREV AND THE ROMANIAN PARTY'S INTERNATIONAL

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AFFAIRS SECRETARY, STEFAN ANDREI, AND AN EARLY CONCLUSION OF THE MEETING BECAUSE OF THEM, ARE UNCONFIRMED. IT IS CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT THERE WAS A CONSISTENT DIFFERENCE IN POINT OF VIEW BETWEEN THE ROMANIANS AND THE SOVIETS, AND IT WOULD NOT BE SURPRISING IF THERE WAS PERSONAL FRICTION OFF THE FLOOR AS WELL. (ANDREI'S SUBSEQUENT SHIFT TO BECOME ROMANIA'S FOREIGN MINISTER IS NOT CONSIDERED A DEMOTION BECAUSE HE IS NOW EQUIVALENT TO GROMYKO.)

D. ROMANIA'S REFUSAL TO ABIDE BY BUDAPEST MEETING RESULTS: ROMANIAN OBJECTIONS CAN BE EASILY DEDUCED FROM ITS SUBSEQUENT HANDLING OF THE MAJOR THEMES SUPPOSEDLY AGREED UPON AND OF THE MEETING'S COMMUNIQUE. TO MAKE THE INAPPLICABILITY OF THE "COMMON PROGRAM" CLEAR, CEAUSESCU MANAGED TO AVOID ANY REFERENCE TO THE ENHANCED RADIATION WARHEAD IN A SECTION DEVOTED TO DISARMAMENT IN THE SPEECH THAT HE DELIVERED AT THE MARCH 22-23 PARTY PLENUM. ALSO, ROMANIA PUBLISHED AN EXPURGATED VERSION OF THE BUDAPEST COMMUNIQUE, CLEARLY NOT SO MUCH BECAUSE OF THE COMMUNIQUE'S CONTENT BUT BECAUSE ROMANIA WANTED TO EMPHASIZE ITS STAND THAT THE TEXT COULD NOT BE BINDING UPON IT. UNDERSCORING THEIR REFUSAL TO CONDONE "COMINFORM"-TYPE IDEOLOGICAL FRONTS, AND TO

MAKE THEIR RIGHT OF CENSORSHIP EVEN CLEARER, THE ROMANIANS THEN TOOK THE OCCASION OF THE PARTY PLENUM TO REVEAL THAT THEY NO LONGER PUBLISH POLEMICAL MATERIAL IN THE ROMANIAN LANGUAGE EDITION OF THE PRAGUE-BASED IDEOLOGICAL JOURNAL "PROBLEMS OF PEACE AND SOCIALISM".

E. THE SPECIFIC POSITIONS ROMANIA CENSORED OUT OF THE BUDAPEST COMMUNIQUE INCLUDED:

-- A REFERENCE TO CELEBRATIONS OF THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF CEMA IN 1979 (A SIMILAR COMMITMENT TO CELEBRATE THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WARSAW PACT, MADE IN A 1974 WARSAW PACT COMMUNIQUE, CAME TO NAUGHT BECAUSE OF ROMANIAN OPPOSITION; ROMANIA HAS BEEN A RECALCITRANT MEMBER OF BOTH ORGANIZATION);
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TIONS SINCE THE MID-SIXTIES, OPPOSING SOVIET ATTEMPTS TO USE THEM TO ACHIEVE GREATER SOVIET/EAST EUROPEAN INTEGRATION);

-- REFERENCES TO "BRIEFINGS" OF THE CONFERENCE BY THE EAST GERMAN AND CUBAN DELEGATES (APPARENTLY BECAUSE THEY SUGGESTED INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION OF PARTY ACTIVITIES);

-- A DESCRIPTION OF THE MEETING AS HAVING BEEN MARKED BY AN BEGIN UNDERLINE OBJECTIVE ATMOSPHERE END UNDERLINE AND HELD IN A SPIRIT OF BEGIN UNDERLINE MUTUAL RESPECT END UNDERLINE WAS CHANGED BY THE ROMANIANS TO A BEGIN UNDERLINE WORKING ATMOSPHERE END UNDERLINE AND A BEGIN UNDERLINE SPIRIT END UNDERLINE OF BEGIN UNDERLINE EQUAL RIGHTS, END UNDERLINE TO EMPHASIZE THE RIGHT OF EACH PARTY TO FORMULATE ITS OWN POLICY.

F. SOVIET GAINS AND LOSSES: THE SOVIETS ACCOMPLISHED THE IMMEDIATE AIM OF THE BUDAPEST MEETING: ALL PARTICIPANTS EXCEPT ROMANIA APPEAR TO HAVE BEGUN A GREATER PROPAGANDA EFFORT TO CONDEMN THE ENHANCED RADIATION WARHEAD, DEFEND THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF SOCIALISM, AND "UNMASK" THE EVILS OF CAPITALISM, AS THE SOVIETS EVIDENTLY WANTED. BUT THE SOVIETS HAVE NOT SUCCEEDED IN ESTABLISHING A COMMON IDEOLOGICAL FRONT AS AN INSTITUTION WITH A RIGHT TO IMPOSE ITS WILL ON DISSENTING PARTIES OR TO SPEAK WITH ONE VOICE FOR ALL OF THE USSR'S LESS POWERFUL ALLIES. THEY WILL UNDOUBTEDLY CONTINUE TRYING, HOWEVER.

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